

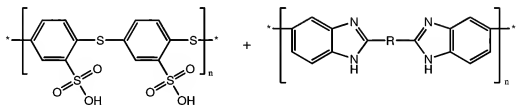
REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 6-15 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-5 will remain pending and claims 6-15 will remain withdrawn after entry of the present invention. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found throughout the specification and claims as originally filed. *No new matter has been added.*

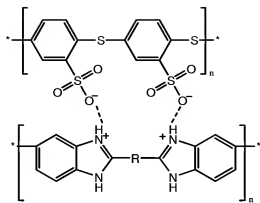
Claim Rejections, 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,525,436 to Savinell et al. (hereafter “Savinell”). Additionally, claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0094466 to Kerres et al. (hereafter “Kerres”). Applicants respectfully argue that neither Savinell nor Kerres disclose a “proton conductive solid polymer electrolyte comprising a basic polymer, *a metal ion*, and an acidic group-possessing polymer... *wherein said acidic group-possessing polymer and said basic polymer are compatibilized with each other*” as required by claim 1.

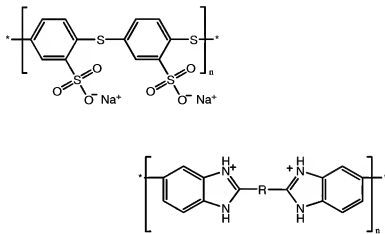
Applicants respectfully submit that the term “compatibilized” has a specific meaning, namely to prevent the interaction between the acidic and the basic polymers. If an acidic polymer and a basic polymer were to be combined without compatibilization, *e.g.*:



the acidic hydrogens on the acidic polymer, because of their substantial susceptibility to dissociation, would be attracted by ionic forces to the basic groups on the basic polymer. The resultant polymers would, in turn, be attracted to one another via ionic forces, *i.e.*:



This phenomenon may cause phase separation, which is an indication that the acidic polymer and the basic polymer are not sufficiently blended. Sufficient blending of the polymers is necessary to prevent the acidic polymer from dissolving in water. The polymers of the present invention *are compatibilized*, *e.g.*, by addition of a metal ion, such that acid-base interaction between the polymers is prevented, *i.e.*,



Neither Savinell nor Kerres teach, or even suggest, a proton conductive solid polymer electrolyte having an acidic group-possessing polymer, a metal ion, and a basic polymer where the acidic group-possessing polymer and the basic polymer are compatibilized with each other as provided in the present application.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Savinell and Kerres, and favorable reconsideration of the claims.

